

### Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) An isolated DNA molecule from a Gram positive bacterium selected from the group of *Staphylococcus*, *Streptococcus*, *Enterococcus*, *Mycoplasma*, *Mycobacterium*, *Borrelia*, *Treponema*, *Rickettsia*, *Chlamydia*, *Helicobacter*, and *Thermatoga*, the isolated DNA molecule comprising a coding region from ~~a *polC* gene, a *dnaE* gene, a *holA* gene, a *holB* gene, a *dnaX* gene, a *dnaN* gene, a *ssb* gene, a *dnaG* gene, or a *dnaB* gene~~ wherein the coding region encodes a polypeptide that has activity as a beta clamp and is capable of functionally interacting with a polymerase during DNA polymerization, and wherein the isolated DNA molecule hybridizes to the complement of SEQ ID NO: 27 under conditions comprising a hybridization buffer comprising 0.9M SSC at 37°C and washing in 0.2X SSC at 42°C.

2-35 (canceled)

36. (original) The isolated DNA molecule according to claim 35, wherein the Gram positive bacterium is *Streptococcus pyogenes*.

37. (currently amended) The isolated DNA molecule according to claim 36, wherein the DNA molecule encodes ~~an~~ the amino acid sequence comprising ~~SEQ. ID. No. SEQ ID NO:28~~.

38. (currently amended) The isolated DNA molecule according to claim 37, wherein the DNA molecule comprises a the nucleotide sequence of ~~SEQ. ID. No. SEQ ID NO:27~~.

39-54 (canceled)

55. (original) An expression system comprising an expression vector into which is inserted a heterologous DNA molecule according to claim 1.

56. (original) The expression system according to claim 55, wherein the heterologous DNA molecule is in sense orientation and correct reading frame.

57. (original) A host cell comprising a heterologous DNA molecule according to claim 1.

58-91 (canceled)